

Lt. William Sutherland

British Officer, 38th Regiment of Foot

“...about 2 in the Morning of the 19th we marched...the Tide being in we were up to our middles before we got into the road continued for about 4 mile without meeting with any person when I heard Lt. Adair of the Marines...call out, here are 2 fellows galloping express to Alarm the Country, on which I immediately rode up to them, Seized one of them & our guide the other, dismounted them &...gave them in charge to the men, A little after we were joined by Lt. Grant of the Royal Artillery who told us the Country, he was afraid was alarmed, of which we had little reason to doubt as we heard several shot being then between 3 & 4 in the morning (a very unusual time for firing) when we were joined by Major Mitchell, Capt. Cochrane, Capt. Lumm, & several other Gentlemen who told us the whole country was alarmed & had galloped for their lives...that they had taken Paul Revierre but was obliged to let him go after having cut his girths and stirrups...A little after I met a very genteel man riding in a carriage they call a Sulky who assured me there were 600 men assembled at Lexington with a view of opposing us...it began new to be day light, and we met some men with a wagon of wood who told us there were odds of 1000 men in arms at Lexington and added that they would fight us...When we came up to the main body (colonists) who were drawn up in the plain opposite to the Church when several officers called out ‘Throw down your arms & you shall come by no harm.’ or words to that effect which they refusing to do, instantaneously the Gentlemen (British Officers) who were on horseback rode in amongst them at which time I heard Major Pitcairn’s voice call out ‘Soldiers don’t fire! Keep your ranks and form and surround them!’ instantly some of the villains were got over the hedge, fired at us, & and it was then & not before that the Soldiers fired...On my coming up Colonel Smith turned to me, asked me, ‘Do you know where a Drummer is?’ which I found, whom the Colonel immediately ordered to beat to arms...the firing immediately ceased on our side, Colonel Smith ordered that the men should replenish the upper part of their Cartridge boxes with ammunition. We marched quietly from this to Concord only seeing some horsemen on the height, I suppose with no other view than to know our number & to make the cowardly disposition, which they did afterwards, to murder us all on our return. On our approaching Concord we saw upon the heights what appeared to me to amount to 12 or 1500 people, on which we halted...to make a disposition to go up the hill... which we did...still as we marched on they retreated...but the main body of them kept still together till they retreated over the Bridge beyond Concord...part of them formed in a meadow and the rest went still further off with the women and children...On our crossing over the Bridge after them Capt. Parsons ordered Capt. Lawrie with 2 companies to stay at the Bridge and he went up to the top of the hill...where we halted a little and saw all this disposition, this height is not much above 300 yards from the Bridge...I looked to my right and saw a large body of men marching almost within Pistol shot of me...and I made the best of my way for the Bridge never out of musquet shot of this party where I joined Capt. Laurie. This formidable force drew up on the heights within 3 or 400 yards of us, Capt. Laurie was kind enough to ask me, was it not better to Acquaint Col. Smith of this, I told him by all means, as their disposition appeared very regular and determined. On which he sent Lt. Robinson to Co. Smith who returned in a very little time with Capt. Lumm who told us Col. Smith would send us a reinforcement immediately, Capt. Lumm very obligingly galloped as hard as he could to hasten the

reinforcement. On their beginning to march down on us...in a very military manner, as they had every advantage of the ground all the Officers mentioned to Capt. Laurie that it would be better to go over the Bridge, raise a few planks, which we did I being the last that came over myself & raised the first plank, Capt. Laurie desired the men to form a line to the right and left of the bridge and the soldiers to keep up their fire. I jumped over the hedge into a meadow just opposite the enemy as they were advancing and begged the [men] would follow me...which only three or four did at which the enemy seeing them all together at the end of the Bridge fired a few shots which our men returned and I with my 3 men returned, in loading & in the act of firing again I received a shot a little above my right breast which turned me half round when I heard Capt. Laurie commanding and exhorting his men to be steady & to return the enemy's fire, I called to Capt. Laurie that I was wounded and came off the best way I could under a fire from the enemy, who to the best of my opinion exceeded 800 men, leaving two of those that turned out with me dead on the spot, one of which I am told they afterwards scalped. On the appearance of the reinforcement they retired immediately & as we fortunately killed their leader & about 15 or more they made no attack on Capt. Parsons...who returned to us in safety. On our being joined by all parties & the wounded Officers put into two one horse chairs, we marched from Concord..."